



Message of the Week

July 17-23, 2002

“JUST SAY NO! Stop the Washington spending binge before it starts.”

- Spending levels in three of the first four non-defense spending bills reported by the Appropriations Committee are *drastically* above the President's request for fiscal year 2003.
- The Interior Appropriations bill was reported out of committee at **\$775 million** above the President's request (not including \$700 million in emergency firefighting money).
- The Treasury / Postal Appropriations bill was reported out of committee at **\$538 million** above the President's request.
- The Agriculture Appropriations bill was reported out of committee at **\$550 million** above the request.
- Together, these bills are **\$1.86 billion** above the President's requests, which themselves were already considerably higher than last year's spending.
- In order to pay for the increased spending in these and other bills, the Appropriations Committee is proposing a \$400+ million reduction from the President's request for the Commerce / Justice / State Appropriations bill and a \$1.8 billion reduction from the request for the Veterans / HUD / FEMA Appropriations bill.
- But the problem is that these later bills are currently scheduled to move at the end of the appropriations process—during the height of campaign season for Election Day 2002.
- If the House passes the first appropriations bills at levels significantly above the President's request, then the House will be forced at the end to either break the House-passed budget or pass bills with significantly less money for veterans, emergency management, and federal law enforcement.
- Does anyone really believe that in an election year Congress will under-fund veterans, emergency management, and federal law enforcement?
- Massive spending increases must be stopped now so that they don't get even worse later this year.